

Featured Alumni - Michael Kercheval (PLC '74)

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*Executive Director
CU Real Estate Center*

The age-old mantra, “When one door closes, another door opens,” is one that Michael Kercheval accredits for many of the opportunities that life has presented to him. A Colorado native from the Western Slope, Kercheval came to CU Boulder looking to major in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology (MCDB). Before long however, he found a new passion in the world of economics. Passionate about medicine, healthcare, and international development, he would eventually graduate with a triple major in Economics, International Affairs, and Political Science with a minor in MCDB. While at CU, Mike was involved with the International Relations Club, The Conference on World Affairs, and Model UN. He also earned his scuba diving certification and his pilot’s license. Perhaps most importantly, his volunteer work with Amigos de Las Americas opened a new door for him post-graduation.

After graduation, Kercheval took a job with Amigos de Las Americas in New York. He moved out to the East Coast, attending Columbia to earn a PhD in Economics while continuing his work with Amigos. Soon he began to work for an economic consulting firm, which lead him to become an investment economist. From there, he would go on to enter the world of real estate. When an opportunity to start a company in Latin America arose, Kercheval seized the moment and began a company that served Argentina, Chile, and Brazil. Most recently, Mike was appointed as the Executive Director of the CU Real Estate Center in 2016, fulfilling his dream of moving back to Colorado.

Mike is passionate about his work. Although he has been the CEO, President, and Chairman of many organizations, he claims never to have worked a day in his life. He is not a believer that somebody should work to enjoy their free time. Rather, he believes everyone should find a career where they are just as passionate about what they do at work, as what they do on the weekends.

Mike Kercheval holds a special place in his heart for PLC - promising that he still puts it on his resume. While he was at CU, Mr. Kercheval served on the PLC Student Staff as a Class Advisor every year until he graduated. He referenced how his education in PLC served him as both an employee and a CEO later in his career. PLC especially gave him an environment where he could be proud of being intellectual, calling it, “the perfect environment to be a nerd and fit in.” He is especially fond of how PLC’s experiential education helped develop him into a stronger leader. He says PLC taught him how to empower others to overcome their fears. Kercheval believes that a strong leader is someone who is empathetic, sympathetic, and can change the way people think, with the purpose of accomplishing a shared vision. PLC gave him a platform where he was able to nurture these skills and beliefs.
